

CURRICULUM VITAE

DR. MARGARET OTIENO

[PhD – Climate Change & ESD; MSc – Env. Sustainability; BA.]

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STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP | CONSERVATION EDUCATION | CLIMATE ADVOCACY

Dr. Margaret is an **award-winning conservation education leader and expert** in children and youth engagement, **with over 25 years of strategic experience in climate advocacy, environmental education, and community empowerment**. Her passion for nature conservation and inclusive governance began early in her career and has since shaped transformative programming across Kenya and beyond. Dr. Margaret currently serves as **Deputy Chair and Regional vice Chair for Eastern and Southern Africa, IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)** and is also the **National Coordinator and CEO of the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya (WCK)** a **pioneering conservation organization and IUCN member** for more than 25 years. WCK has inspired similar youth-led movements globally. Since 2008, she has scaled national conservation impact by leading WCK to engage millions of young people in more than 5000 schools and by expanding its Endowment Fund for the financial sustainability of the organisation. Her influence includes founding the **Community Conservation Strategies (CCS)**, serving on multiple boards, and driving policy-responsive education models across Africa. In 2020, Dr. Margaret was honoured with the **prestigious Brandwein Medal** for her lifelong dedication to environmental education. Her innovations include the **annual East African Teachers Programme**, which continues to promote conservation leadership in the region. Through her roles, Dr. Margaret continues to champion youth-driven action, grassroots advocacy, and cross-sector partnerships for a more sustainable planet.

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

- **Deputy Chair & Regional Vice Chair for Eastern and Southern Africa, IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)**, 2021 to date.
- **Regional vice Chair for East and Southern Africa, IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)**, 2017 – 2021).
- **Board Member**, Ecotourism Society of Kenya, 2023 to date.
- **Board Member & Chair of the Membership Committee**, Conservation Alliance of Kenya (CAK), 2022 to date.
- **Honorary Warden**, Kenya Wildlife Service, 2021 to date.
- **Founder & Director**, Community Conservation Strategies (CCS), 2019 to date.
- **Board Director**, Elsa Conservation Trust, 2015 to date.
- **Board Member**, African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (Giraffe Centre), Nairobi, 2008 to date.
- **Board Member, Management Skills for Wildlife Conservation (MSWC) 2023 to date**

HONOUR AND RECOGNITION

- She was **awarded the prestigious Brandwein Medal** in recognition of outstanding dedication to nature conservation and environmental education in 2020.

MILESTONES

- Serving as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and National Coordinator with the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, she strengthened conservation education impact nationally by leading Wildlife Clubs of Kenya to reach over 5000 schools and 2 million youth through structured environmental education programmes since 2008.
- Enhanced financial sustainability in conservation by growing the organization's Endowment Trust and developing countrywide Wildlife Resource Centres thus ensuring long-term programme funding and institutional resilience.
- Expanded national conservation influence by implementing three consecutive strategic plans between 2009 and 2023, establishing a National Conservation Coordinating Committee, and revitalizing regional activities across all counties.

- Strengthened regional capacity for conservation education by developing the annual East African Teachers Programme, which has trained hundreds of educators and continues to run successfully since its inception.
- As Programmes Manager with the African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (Giraffe Centre), increased environmental education outreach by integrating Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into school programmes which reached hundreds of students annually with practical conservation learning.
- As Programmes Officer with Elsamere Conservation Trust, expanded conservation education reach by managing and delivering environmental programmes to over 100,000 learners and community leaders through the Elsamere Field Studies Centre over a 10-year period.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Driving global conservation impact by leading strategic communication and education initiatives aligned with the IUCN Nature 2030 Programme, and the post-2020 biodiversity framework.
- Enhancing behavioral change outcomes by applying and expanding evidence-based methodologies in social and behavioral change communication (SBCC) across diverse conservation contexts.
- Strengthening global conservation culture by designing and implementing inclusive strategies that embed conservation values into formal, non-formal, and informal education systems.
- Expanding cross-sectoral collaboration by building and nurturing partnerships across generations, cultures, and geographies to amplify conservation knowledge and action.
- Elevating youth leadership in conservation by mobilizing and mentoring young professionals and networks to lead inclusive, youth-driven environmental movements.
- Scaling public engagement for biodiversity by leveraging the Union's reach to inspire diverse audiences including women, urban communities, and legislators to connect with and act for nature.
- Promoting excellence in conservation communication by recognizing and celebrating member achievements through award systems that highlight innovation and impact.
- Advancing Indigenous and traditional knowledge by integrating diverse epistemologies into conservation strategies and supporting culturally grounded approaches to sustainability.
- Amplifying global campaigns for nature by leading initiatives to connect people with nature through storytelling, festivals, and community-based actions.
- Championing participatory leadership by promoting transparent, inclusive governance and co-creating regionally responsive programmes with members and partners.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Wildlife Clubs of Kenya

[The most effective grass-root conservation programme of its kind in the whole of Africa, An IUCN member for over 25 years, and a 1986 UNEP Global 500 Honour Roll awardee that has driven a continental wildlife clubs' movement and inspired similar clubs in Asia, Latin America, and other parts of the Global South.]
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & National Coordinator, January 2008 to date.

Elsamere Conservation Trust

Programmes Officer, April 1995 – April 2005

Anglican Church of Kenya – Christian Community Service

Deputy Director Research/Development Officer May 1990 – March 1995

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- **Doctor of Philosophy in Climate Change and Education for Sustainable Development**
Kenyatta University, 2015.
- **Master of Science in Environment Sustainability**
London South Bank University, 2002.
- **Bachelor of Arts**
University of Nairobi, 1990.

Referees will be furnished upon request.

